

a fever? Jesus touches her hand; the fever leaves her. Does a Galilean leper kneel before him, begging to be cleansed? Jesus is moved with compassion, stretches forth his hand, touches him; the leper is cleansed. Is a funeral procession coming from Nain? Jesus approaches the bier, touches it; the dead youth sits up. Are flute players making lamentation over the dead body of Jairus' daughter? Jesus touches the maiden's hand; her spirit returns, she walks. Do the blind men of Capernaum beg him for mercy? Jesus touches their eyes; they see. Is Peter sinking in Gennesaret's waves? Jesus stretches forth his hand, touches him; he is saved. Do citizens of Decapolis beseech him to heal a deaf stammerer? Jesus puts his fingers into the unfortunate's ears, and touches his tongue; the deaf ears are opened, the tied tongue speaks plain. Do citizens of Bethsaida bring a blind man for cure? Jesus touches his eyes; the blind man sees. Are the favorite three terrified by their Master's transfiguration? Jesus comes and touches them; they are calmed. Is the demoniac boy convulsed in death? Jesus touches him; he is healed. Does a woman bowed with a spirit of infirmity eighteen years worship in a synagogue? Jesus calls her, and touches her; immediately she is made straight. Are blind men begging by the gates of Jericho? Jesus touches their eyes; straightway they see. Does Peter strike off the right ear of Malchus? Jesus touches his ear; it is healed. Is the exile (John at Patmos) affrighted by his vision of the risen King? The risen King touches him; he is calmed.

Why did Jesus thus appeal to the sense of touch? Was it because he could not heal without touching? No; he healed the nobleman's son in Capernaum, while he himself remained in Cana? Why, then, did he touch? Because his touches, like his miracles, were acted parables.

Glance at some of these parable-touches. For example: There was a touch of encouragement, as when he stretched forth his hand to the sinking Peter. There was the touch of affection, as when he had laid his hands on the infants of Perea. There was the touch of instruction, as when he healed the deaf stammerer of Decapolis, taking him aside from the crowd, putting his fingers into the unhearing ears, touching the inarticulate tongue, looking heavenward. There was the touch of sympathy, as when he stretched forth his hand and touched the Galilean leper.

Here in fact was one of the great meanings of the Incarnation itself. The Son of God became the Son of man in order that he might get into touch with our leprous humanity, and cleanse it with his own purifying contact. We cannot be too grateful that Jesus is not a fastidious Saviour.

Here also is the secret of Christ's great sway. He rules our hearts, not by patronizing us from Heaven's throne, but by associating with us in earth's vale. His gentleness makes us great.

And here also is the secret of our own

healing ministry. What our leprous world needs is the healing touch of a practical, sympathetic contact. It may be that the church is losing many a Paul, because no Ananias or Barnabas offers to give the right hand of fellowship to Saul of Tarsus.

#### The Joy of Service

The Advance.

The chief joys of life, if we were wise enough to perceive it, are to be found in the path of service. Vacations are good, rest is good; but they are good only as interludes of service. In his letters to Timothy toward the close of his life Paul does not recount his vacation experience—if he ever had any they were like his vacation experiences at Athens while he was waiting for the arrival of Silas and Timothy—but he looked back with joy on a life of service, and forward with joy to a crown of righteousness, the reward of faithful service. So it has been and is with other servants of God, they find their chief satisfaction in current life and in recalling the past, not in the evanescent joys of side play, but in serving their day and generation according to the will of God.

Thank God for something to do! The thing which you are doing just now may be entirely to your liking as to kind or grade or pecuniary compensation, but you can get satisfaction out of it by doing it well, and the way to higher service is opened by well-doing.

"We take with solemn thankfulness  
Our burden up, nor ask it less;  
And count it joy that even we  
May suffer, serve, or wait for Thee—  
Thy will be done!"

### The Sunday School

#### SUB-DANGERS OF JOINING AMUSEMENTS AND RELIGION

C. F. YODER

(Synopsis of an address given before a County S. S. Convention.)

Two good things are included in the subject assigned to me. I believe in play. God has placed the instinct in the frolicsome kitten, in the lamb as it gambols on the lea and in the child with its toys and in the man in his recreation, and this phase of life has its legitimate place and should be cared for as well as mental or physical training. I am glad for the recent move to provide suitable play grounds for the city children.

And I believe in religion, that highest instinct of man which leads him on to God. The man without it is to be pitied. Let it be false and the man will be false, but let it be pure and the man will be pure for he becomes like the God he worships.

But the question is, should these two things be joined? Formerly joy and religion were divorced and the flesh and the world were regarded as only evil. Out of this idea grew the monasteries and the inquisition of the dark ages. Out of it came the Blue Laws and the Puritanical customs of our fathers. Out of it came the songs of the past which sigh for the crown and harp to

come. In our day a reaction has come, and we now sing "Scatter Smiles and Sunshine," while we open the door of the Sunday school and of the young people's society and the midnight mission and by rewards and socials and philanthropies and devices of all kinds we seek to lure the sinner into the Gospel fold, into touch with the Christ.

What have been the results? Some good and some evil,—therefore this discussion. It is difficult because one cannot draw a line and say all on this side is good and all on that side is bad. But we can find some guiding principle.

We are taught to "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind and strength." Therefore we are not to ignore the body but treat it as God's temple. Therefore we need gymnasiums for strength and schools for the mind and social meetings and spiritual meetings that we may "glorify God in our bodies and spirits which are God's." But again is it the business of the church to provide for all these needs?

Jesus healed and the apostles cared for the poor but both alike made these their secondary work. One by one the church has turned over its cares to the state—the care of the poor, of the blind and insane, the work of education. Shall it keep the business of amusements? Its work is spiritual and it simply looks after these other good works when they would otherwise be neglected.

In the reaction against Puritanism we are in danger of going to the opposite extreme. Beecher is said to have originated what has been called "the cook-stove heresy," which has taken on so many forms in these last days. Some of the dangers of joining amusements with religion all may observe:

1. There is the ever-present danger of excesses and extremes. One society holds socials every week. Another has regular dances as a means of winning the young folks. At one social a girl was put behind the door and five cents charged to kiss her. Such things are not common but they do occur and occasion a great deal of stumbling.

2. There is danger of lowering the standard of consecration. Emotion is largely physical and to be glorified there must be a pondering to the physical senses which results in carnality.

3. There is danger again of identifying amusements with religion and coming to seek fun rather than souls.

Beecher one time announced, "We will now have a performance by the choir after which we will proceed with our worship."

4. Along with this comes the danger of gaining accessions from wrong motives and clogging the work with a cargo of worldly members.

5. As an inevitable result of this comes the danger of losing the respect of the world. A certain pastor shared the sport of a worldly man but when the worldly man got sick he called for his negro servant and not the pastor to pray for him.

6. A further danger is that of losing the